

## November 2024

Dear fellow pieces of stardust,

Parts of us have experienced all the seasons of time. Pieces of us have lived in all eras, in all the forms of evolution and devolution, through times of immense joy and wild devastation. Pieces of us have been all the species and all the forms in all the galaxies ...

All the pieces do come together to give a sense of knowing, but also a knowing of what to do and how. Is there a knowing that things are going to change in a way that people alive today haven't seen before? Yes.

And ... stardusts, this is the place we have lived. It's not different, people are just getting reacquainted with the ability to say things out loud. There is a feeling that people can be honest in a way that they haven't before.

That includes you reading this. You, too, get to be honest in a way that you haven't before. You get to be honest with yourself and those with whom it is safe to be. Can change feel uncomfortable? Yes, and there is learning in that. Dig into the corners of discomfort to understand them.

**What are the systems of harm that you contribute to?**

How can you limit or change your engagement in those systems?

**What are your gifts? Your talents and skills?**

Let the people around you know what you have to trade and what you might need to trade for.

Extract ourselves in ways that feel impactful and meaningful. What is loudest to the people who don't put people first? Money. Work at spending less money in chains. Food, clothes, entertainment — spend on small businesses or spend local. Let's show capitalism how we feel about it and make these changes.

All the subscription services, the convenience entertainment, the games, the things that help distract ... Invest your money in the community. Do you spend \$20 a month on Netflix, \$14 on Paramount, and \$19 on Hulu? What if you got a subscription to a local theater company? Or start a monthly open mic at your local bookstore, arcade, or apothecary ...

Organizations like ours will need as much support and tending as possible. As we work to provide care outside of systems, as we work to keep choice accessible to all people, as we care for people with tenderness and love, as we create soft havens for those seeking full-spectrum choice ... we need you also supporting us. If that is money, know that we will use it in meaningful ways. If it's time, your time will make a difference.

Community care is at your fingertips, mutual aid is in your bones, and knowing there is a way for you to care is in the threads of who you are. You have known for all of time, but it's time to remind yourself in ways that are meaningful and sustainable.

Most of all, know that you are the literal magic of the universe, here in this form for a finite time, and you really matter. You really fucking matter.

With a tenderness wrapped in chain mail,

Lashanna

**This post from David Spangler demonstrates a good antidote to the hate and fear that seems to be swirling around us at this time ... this is something that we can do!**

"For years now there has been a gathering of energies to stimulate humanity's evolution towards greater planetary awareness and wholeness. The purpose of this energy is not to make change happen, but to enable humanity to find within itself the power to partner with spirit and with Gaia to respond positively and effectively to the changes that are already unfolding. Anyone who chooses to embody this power of partnership and bring Light into the world will find allies.

Even on our own (and we are never wholly on our own, for we are always embedded in a larger reality of Light), there are clear things we can do.

For one, we can be aware that we are in the midst of a process of redefining the reality in which we live — is it one of wonder, of joy, of compassion, of love, of Light, of hope? Or is it one of fear, of hatred, of contempt, of separation, of isolation?

For another, we can avoid characterizing this process as a battle between light and dark; to do so is to trivialize and distort it, it is more complex than that. It is not a battle but a metamorphosis, a growing up and leaving behind childish ways. It is an organic process involving humanity, Gaia, and the Sacred in a wondrous alchemy of transformation and emergence.

The third important thing to do is to bring to both our personal and global situations our love, compassion, and forgiveness on the one hand, and on the other, the courage to stand in our sovereignty and refuse to be shaped and defined by fear, anger, or hatred. We need to stand our ground and not let those who are shaped in the moment by fear and anger define the nature of reality. We embrace them as lovingly as we can, but we do not give ground. We don't need to. When we stand in our Light, we do not stand alone. The universe of Spirit stands with us.

Think of it this way: a battle implies adversaries, winners and losers, conquerors and victims. Those are the categories humanity has lived with for millennia, and they are more than outworn now. They are dangerous. Instead, we need to think the way a caterpillar thinks as it transforms into a butterfly. The cells that formed the old structure of its body are not enemies to be defeated and cast out by the new shape; they contain the very life force and substance from which the new will be built once they surrender to the alchemical miracle of metamorphosis. In this time through which we are living, we may and do have opponents, but we do not have enemies.

Everyone potentially has something vital to contribute to the new body that seeks emergence.

This process is a soul-size challenge worthy of everything we can bring to it. We are not without tools in doing this. We not only have the rich traditions of compassion, forgiveness, loving, and communion found in all the world's spiritual traditions, but we have new insights and tools such as non-violent communication, conflict resolution techniques, new

insights into self and sovereignty, and the tools of subtle activism. What we need are the knowledge and willingness to use these tools and to reach for them first before grabbing the more familiar responses of anger and fear. When we do this, even if only in the context of our personal lives, we nourish a calming field of collaboration with spiritual forces that can spread out into the world, becoming part of humanity's overall response. The simple fact is that we do not act alone; in the power of our individual sovereignty, we are in resonance and connection with the whole of humanity.

When we refuse to entertain fear, hatred or anger towards those different from ourselves and refuse to participate in the spreading of such hurtful thoughts and emotions, we create an energetic habit that makes a similar response easier for everyone else. We support each other energetically, pulling each other towards the Light. We can provide a powerful intentionality to move in more loving directions, towards peace and compassion, listening and respect. We can intentionally promote the Light, and when we do, we find we have powerful allies, for that intentionality puts us, as they say, on the side of the angels who are pulling in that direction with us.

This moment in our history calls to us to stand in our power, the power of our love, our hope, our joy, and our Light. It's up to each of us to determine how we do so in order to bring energies of peace, compassion, and courage to meet the needs of the world. As I say, there are many tools available to us to bring love to our world. We simply need to use them.

### **Here is an example of a simple, subtle activism exercise:**

The key to all subtle activism is to find and stand in an inner presence of calm, peace, sovereignty, spaciousness, and love. The power underlying subtle activism lies in our ability to feel connected through this presence to the Sacred, to the well-being of humanity, to spiritual allies, and to Gaia — the spirit and life force of the earth. From this presence and this connectedness comes a power of blessing ... how you do this is up to you, but here is a simple suggestion:

- Find a place in your heart and mind in which you feel stable, calm, peaceful, and loving. Use whatever spiritual, psychological, energetic, and physical tools or techniques to help you accomplish this.
- Imagine (contemplate or reflect on) as clearly and lovingly as you can, your connections to the rest of humanity, to the world of nature and the land, and to whatever spiritual forces and images of sacredness are meaningful to you. Feel those connections enhance your presence by enabling you to be part of a larger wholeness, one graced with compassion, love and an intelligent, wise awareness.
- Hold your sense of yourself within that enhanced presence and feel its energy go out to your immediate environment, connecting in loving ways with the specific world around you. Then focus on a quality of constructive and peaceful collaboration. Imagine people who otherwise are split apart by differences of race, politics, ethnicity, religion, geography, and who may experience those differences in fearful ways leading to anger and violence, now held in the spirit of this collaboration.
- Feel and see them held in the grace of a loving, peaceful spirit in which non-violent communication is possible. Your task is not to impose anything but to hold a condition in which this clear, constructive non-violent communication is possible. See the people in your vision able to overcome the emotions of fear, anger, hatred, suspicion and the like and able to listen to and hear one another. Your task is not to get them to agree but to enable them to listen without fear and with mutual respect. Use this visualization with any situation of conflict that you've seen, heard or read about in the media.
- Finally, imagine that you are a lighthouse. You radiate all around you a light of stability, peace, calm, forgiveness, love, and compassion. Visualize this clarity and stability spreading far and wide, linking up with the light of other similar lighthouses, other people who are reaching to express peace, compassion and love. As these beams connect, a web of light is woven over the land that empowers all of us everywhere and makes the fear less fearful, the anger and hatred less persuasive.



– Do this as long as it feels comfortable, carrying this presence of Light in your heart and mind. As you go through your day, when you encounter either the presence of fear and its offshoots of anger and hate or you see it reflected in the media, reaffirm that you are a beacon of courage, strength, calm, love, the creator of a space in which clear communication may take place.

Like Gandalf in the Lord of the Rings when confronting the Balrog, stand in your sovereignty and say to the spirit and energy of fear, "You shall not pass!" And let it be so!"

## Remembering October



### Ms. Lois's VSED

In October we supported a community VSED guest and her family at Asphodel. She was a pioneer for reproductive choice on the east side of the mountains here in Washington State.



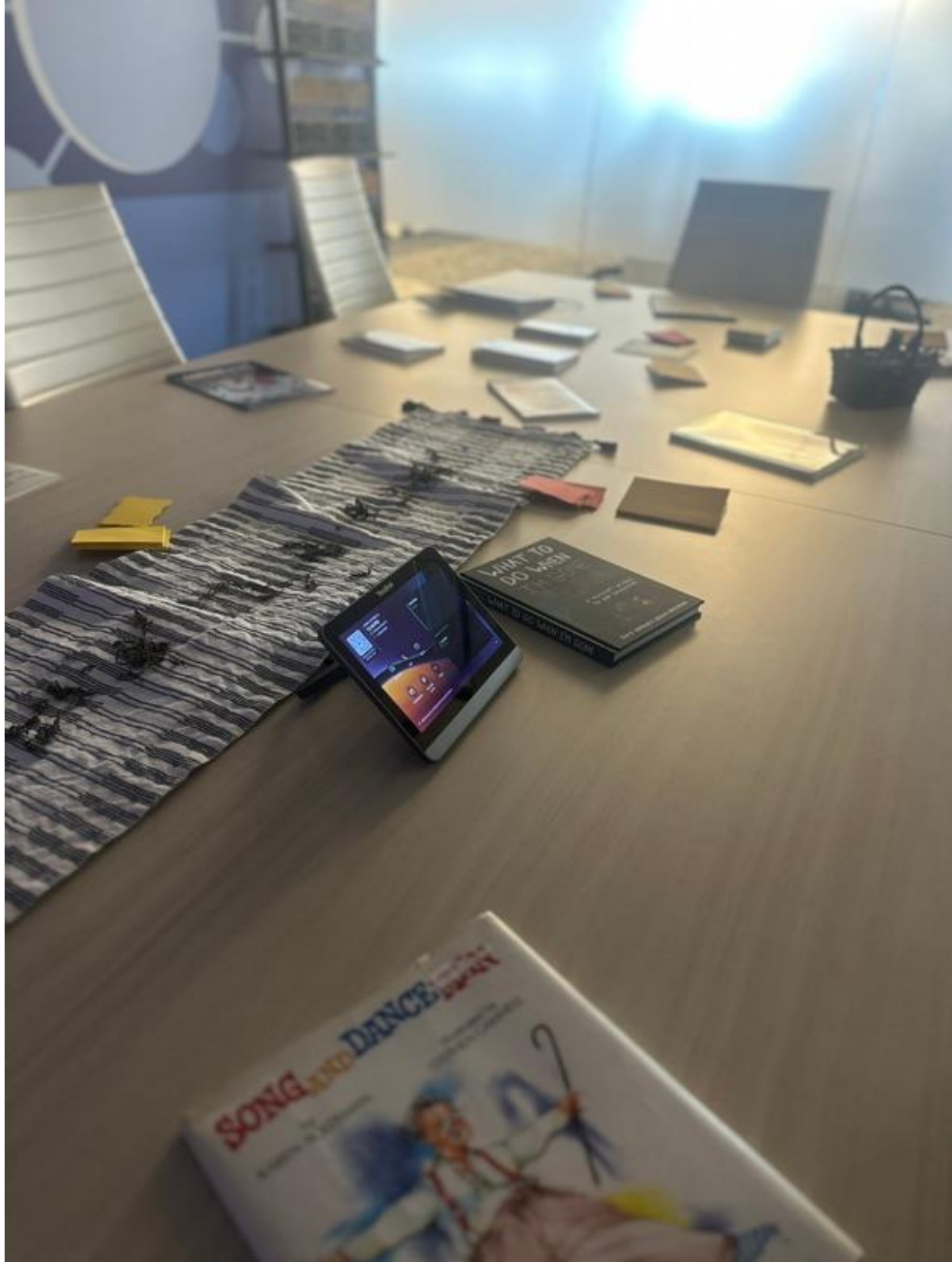
Asphodel also welcomed three guests who used Medical Aid in Dying and the people who supported them.

---



Last month we were invited into a downtown corporate space to support staff who were learning of the death of a coworker in a leadership role. We were able to offer two spaces that welcomed people in to engage in ways that felt meaningful.

If you have a business, work at a business, or are friends with someone who owns a business, please encourage them to welcome us to provide listening spaces for their staff. Even just once monthly will make an incredible difference. Staff has an opportunity to talk, emote, and be in a way they may not have the opportunity to with co-workers or people they live with. This helps to create new spaces for community care.



---





In October, we supported five families with death or grief support and three with cremation costs.

---



Local handyhuman Ryland gave our guest room closets a much-needed hug. With these new shelves, we are able to store all medical supplies behind a door and out of sight! And guests now have their own shelf for personal things on, which it creates so much more room in the spaces!

While he was here, Ryland also installed window bird-feeders (I mean, *squirrel* feeders) and reinforced our front-porch railing. *We really need a new front deck.* If you know someone who builds decks and wants to do something good for community, please send them our way. Thank you, Ryland, for the discount, the amazing work, and the care!





## *Finding Words in the Silence*

In the quiet silence, shadows grow around my mind.  
I sit with the echoes of dreams I held close for you.  
A future full of laughter, some tears, and even slamming doors—  
But now, only silence lives where your light should have grown.

There are no words for this deep emptiness,  
No way to describe a cry that never crossed the sound barrier of life.  
The weight of a name that cannot be spoken without tears,  
No way to describe the shattered remnants of my dreams.

Yet, within this silence, I feel your presence,  
I hear the whispers of your spirit.  
You are the wind that blows across my tear stained face,  
The glimmer of sun that breaks through clouds on gray days.

But, the world moves on faster than I can bear,  
They expect my grief to operate like a 100-yard dash, quick and contained.  
But how can my grief be condensed into a finite space of time?  
How can the limits of my love for you be measured?

Others may not see that I carry you with me,  
That your memory is forever etched into my soul.  
My love for you continuously blooms within my heart.  
Your name flows like sweet honey, not bitter lemons, from my lips.

I know there are others out there who also know this ache, so deep,  
Who've cried themselves through sleepless nights of what feels like  
unending grief,  
You are not alone, we are not alone on this grueling road—  
We walk together, sharing this heavy load.

For though we may speak their names in silence,  
Our love for them is anything but small,  
And in this space of aching,  
As parents, we hear each other's call.

So here I stand with you, side by side,  
Often hidden in the shadows, though our grief we will not hide,  
We will find the strength, we laugh and smile again,  
We carry on their memories, with a love that can never end.

*~Marquita Straus*

**October marked a sacred time for us to come together to break the silence around pregnancy and infant loss**, and to embrace our grief as a community. Imani's Light offered a series of events to help honor our babies, connect with one another, and offer support to those navigating this journey.

### □ **Memorial Tree Art Installation Recap**

Throughout October, community gathered to create the Memorial Tree Art Installation, where families honored their babies by submitting names and dates to be added to the tree. The installation was on display at the Bereaved Parents Brunch, where the group collectively honored these precious lives.



## Imani's Light



**This year Une Bonne Mort (UBM) was a delightful success. We had 113 people register for the conference and 77 attend in person. Thank you to everyone! As community members, practitioners, and friends, we need to be having the conversations we had that day *with more regularity*.**

UBM replays will be available in the future, and when they are, you'll receive the update on social media, newsletters, and our website. We appreciate your patience.

## Une Bonne Mort

### What folks thought about Une Bonne Mort

"I will no longer be living in the Seattle area next year, but I will absolutely travel to attend. If there's anything that can be done to help plan it for next year that someone like me could do from afar, I would love to be kept in the loop! Thank you again! This

"Really incredible. This is one of the biggest areas of death care that need more focus. Thank you to the presenter for both the information and the radical act of being vulnerable about child loss with a room of strangers."

"It provided valuable perspectives on supporting individuals and families through the VSED process with compassion and professionalism. The case review format allowed for real-world application, making it highly relevant and



---

**LOOK AT WHAT WE DID!!!**  
**You get to spend all year with us ...**



## 2025 Calendar

12 Pockets of Joy from  
A Sacred Passing to You

This calendar is a compilation of 12 sweet moments from our community home, Asphodel, and some interesting death-care facts as well. These are a fundraiser for us — please buy them and buy some for other people, if that's something you do. Please let other people know they can buy them! Are you in an office? Maybe the manager wants to get everyone a wall calendar for the new year ... hint hint — ours?

Thank you for helping us share the fact that we exist and our care is here.

**Order a  
Calendar**

**Volunteer Information**

## Learn More About Volunteering with A Sacred Passing

### November Volunteer Gathering

We are in need of **sustainable long-term commitments** from members of our community to continue offering community care. **If you have been through an ASP volunteer training and are waiting for the right time, we need you!** If you receive our emails for volunteer support and are no longer available to say yes, let us know.

This season's training will culminate in a new volunteer orientation at Asphodel, our community death-care house, on **Sunday, November 17, from 1-3pm PST** with an *optional* social hour from 12-1pm.

### Things that current volunteers can come and do:

- Basement office set up
- Supply organizing
- Garage organizing
- Mutual Aid clothing drop, bringing clothing to houseless folks
- Leaf raking and bagging
- Planting winter starts
- Power-washing the back deck
- Kitchen cupboard cleaning and organizing
- Cleaning some things around the house
- Zine folding
- Repotting plants
- Board Secretary
- Volunteer Coordinator

See something that you'd like to do! Yaaay! Email Lashanna for details and scheduling [lashanna@asacredpassing.org](mailto:lashanna@asacredpassing.org)

**Sign Up to  
Volunteer**

---

## Can you offer a room in your home for A Place to Die?

Locations in Washington State  
that would benefit immediately:

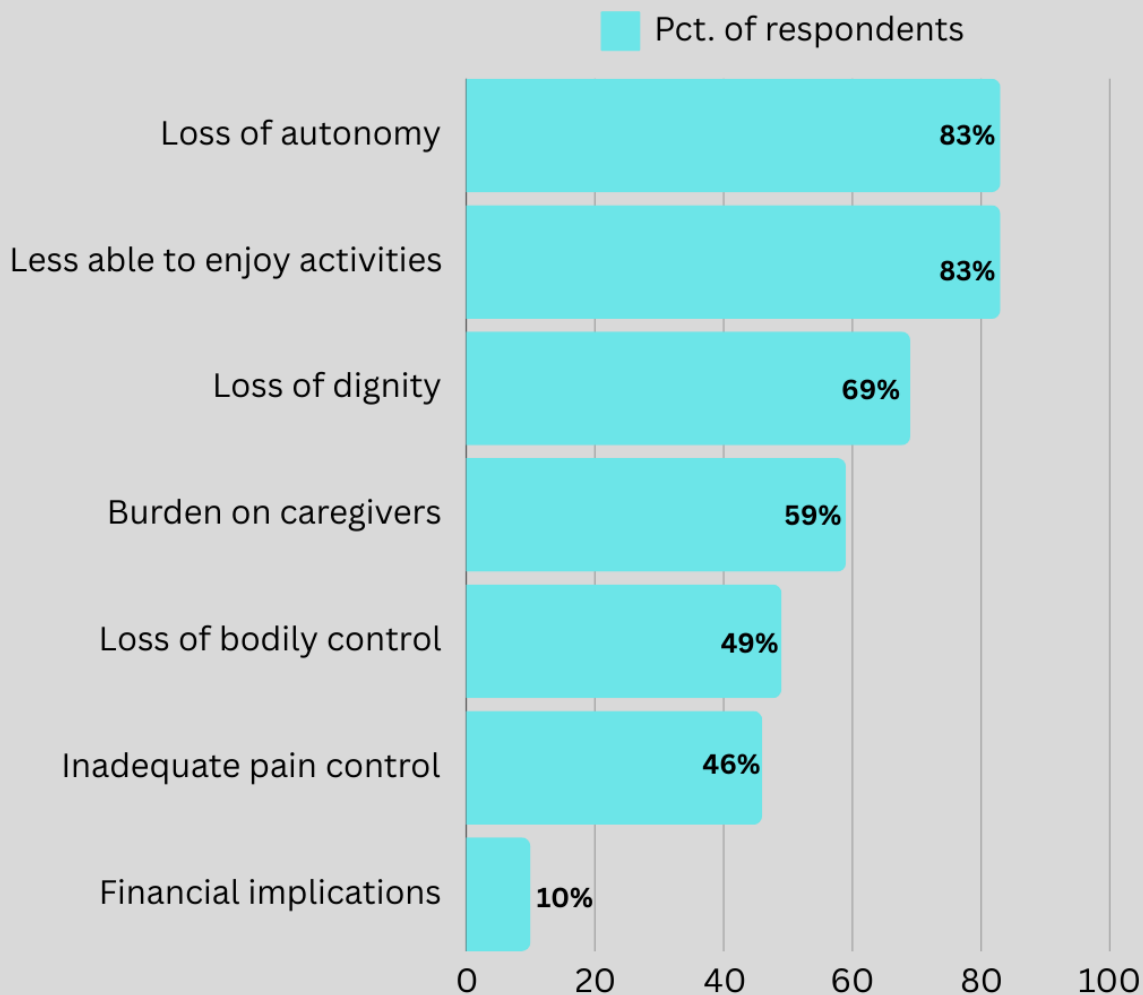
Spokane  
Tacoma  
Olympia  
Whidbey Island

Vancouver, WA  
Tri-Cities  
Orcas Island  
Bellingham

Please complete this form to start the  
process

## End-of-Life Concerns

Percentage of MAiD patients reporting these concerns



Source: Washington Department of Health physician reports (2022, latest available). Created by Chris Fruitrich.

Thanks End of Life WA for sharing this resource from the Washington department of health!

## Upcoming Events & Community Connections

Thanks for helping us toward being sustainable!  
Donate directly and sign up to volunteer.



## How to Grieve a Matriarch

Join former child, current mother, and future ancestor Asha Newell for How to Grieve a Matriarch, an online story and skill share on **Saturday, November 16th, from 1-3pm PST**. Asha will recount the life and death of her grandmother, Sioux Cordova, and share how she navigated anticipatory grief and loss while parenting her young children and intentionally framing their first close encounter with death. Through personal stories and practical tools, this session offers one death-tender's approach to talking to kids about grief, mortality, and death — a perspective celebrating curiosity and awe while fostering honesty and acceptance.

**RSVP to follow** (please follow our Eventbrite!)

## Community Care Book Club

A Sacred Passing will be starting a virtual Community Care Book Club in the new year. The first group read will be Healing Justice Lineages - Dreaming at the Crossroads of Liberation, Collective Care, and Safety by Cara Page and Erica Woodland.

We will be announcing more details soon, including a date for the first meetup and a form to sign up! If you are interested, or have questions, please contact <https://leilani@asacredpassing.org>



### Grief & Care Under Capitalism Support Group

We are in a constant state of collective grief. Grief doesn't occur only when someone dies. Struggling under the weight of racial capitalism, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of violence and oppression that we navigate daily takes a toll on us that we are often not consciously aware of. When people feel inexplicably sad, burnt out, or tired as hell, "you need better self-care" is the response that is too often thrown back at us. We can work as hard as possible to take care of ourselves, but there are limits to healing when we are inundated with trauma that we cannot control.

This support group is for people needing a space to talk with other folks who feel exploited and exhausted by capitalism. Many grief-support groups are death-related, so we at A Sacred Passing offer this space to grieve another way that we struggle.

**1st & 3rd Wednesdays (monthly)**  
**7-8:30pm PST** (same zoom link)

[More Community Care Events](#)

---

### End of Life Ready Session 11.20.24

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 @ 12:00 PM

Join End of Life WA for a 60-minute session that will show you how to plan ahead for end-of-life. We will review how to fill out and document a set of Advance Directives, how to choose a Health Care Agent if you can't speak for yourself, and what choices

are legal and accessible to die on your terms in Washington State. After attending this session, we hope you'll feel more comfortable talking to the people you trust with your care about your end-of-life wishes.

## Register Online

### Bereaved Sibling Support Group

2nd Monday of the month  
6:30pm MST (Mountain Time)

No charge to attend, peer-led (18+)

Call or Email Tawnya to request a warm intro, details, and access.  
719-430-5272

[tawnya@deardepartures.com](mailto:tawnya@deardepartures.com)

-----

### Connecting Community

Learn more about what Anna is doing down at Road End Farm.

Road End Farm exists to expand the choices available to our unhoused and under-resourced neighbors, when they are sick or when it is time for them to die, by providing a community clinic, tiny hospice homes, and street-based Palliative and Hospice Care.

[deadfolxfarm.org](http://deadfolxfarm.org)

### Seattle Solidarity Budget

We believe true safety comes from guaranteeing that people's material needs are met. Each person in Seattle should have what they need to survive & thrive.

One of Seattle Solidarity Budget's priorities is to make City of Seattle processes and procedures — like the budgeting process, Surveillance Impact Reports (SIR), and Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) — accessible, understandable, digestible, and actionable for all of us in our community. [Check out the educational videos at this link.](#)

Seattle Solidarity Budget demands that the City of Seattle provide the residents of our city with basic guarantees that provide a base standard of living and quality of life for all people in Seattle. Please see the Seattle Solidarity Budget website to read Nine Essential Guarantees that the community has developed.

[Learn More](#)

## Help Us Grow the Past Students Directory

We are working on compiling a directory of past ASP students ***who have completed death-care and/or death-doula training with ASP*** to aid in connecting our community members. If you wish to be included in the directory, which will be available on A Sacred Passing's website, [please fill out this Google form](#).

Have questions? Need assistance? Reach out to [classes@asacredpassing.org](mailto:classes@asacredpassing.org) and include the word "directory" in the subject line. Thank you so much for your time and participation. We look forward to building this together with you all!

Past Students, Add Yourself to the



## Thank You, Artist Contributors



### Examples of Burial Shrouds:

Tachrichim (Hebrew: תכריכים) are white burial furnishings in which the bodies of deceased Jewish people are dressed by the Chevra Kadisha, or other burial group.

Shroud of Turin, believed by some to be the burial shroud of the Christian prophet Jesus. Many Christians continue this practice of shrouding the deceased.

Muslims as well use burial shrouds that are made of white cotton or linen. Kaffan sheets Muslims are wrapped in for burial in a traditional practice called Ghusl.

Chachapoya people of the Inca Empire would mummify their dead and wrap them in woven cloth shrouds in the fetal position and then stood them on the cliffs.

Historic Egyptians would embalm the bodies of those who had died in herbal preservatives, then shroud the body in natural fabrics.

Since stone age, northern Europeans would create textiles made of wild plants such as Nettles and fabrics like linens.



In human history, shrouds have been used through all parts of the world in religious, ecological, and personal creations. There are many reasons!

Washing and shrouding the body of someone you care for is a powerful ritual to honor and connect to the deceased through time and touch.

This practice can also offer a way to slow down and acknowledge grief when a person's death may have been sudden or traumatic, to give the community more time with the person's physical body.

Shrouds are often used as a covering. For some, it may provide a sense of dignity and honor to the person who has died.

The shroud covers and protects the body while shielding it from view if desired or swaddling for transportation and during the disposition process.

- Take time to research the processes for organ donation, autopsy, and embalming the body. Each of these practices may be different depending on the location and institution.

Note about Medical & Funeral Care:



адресу 1501 е се

- Gather materials and prepare supplies (i.e.: water, wash towels, bowl, castile soap, oil, sgrout).
- Discover only one position of the body at a time, wash the body.
- There may be guidance for body care in your experience, lineage, or tradition. One way is to begin with the face, head, and hands, then limbs and torso.
- Oil: skin balm, or lotion can be used for moisture, or offering care.

Nonmedical Washing in Body:

can be relatively affordable. Stridons might be made from animal skins, a besedect, fabrics, all of which are able to do the important work of swaddling the body of the dead. Always unique, some people choose it out of desire, some are looking for a low-cost option, and some are seeking for a covering with low environmental impact.



## Body Care After Death: Washing & Shrouding



# Thank you!

Created with Care by:  
**thesunflowercycle.com**  
**asacredpassing.org**



### Resources:

A Sacred Passing: Williams, L., & Diegel, S. (2020). Body Washing & Shrouding. A Sacred Passing: Death Midwifery and Community Education. [asacredpassing.org/resources](https://asacredpassing.org/resources).

Douglas Harper. (2001). shroud (n.). Online Etymology Dictionary.  
<https://www.etymonline.com/word/shroud>  
<https://youtu.be/sDM4DeSs4vc>

Jones, Barbara (1947). *Design for Death*. London: Andre Deutsch Limited. p. 57.

## Download & Print the Zine

**Haiku Pyrography by Brasswax**  
**Materials:** basswood (*Tilia americana*)  
**Dimensions:** 11" x 8" x 0.75"  
**Instagram:** [@brasswax](#)



"This is one of those pieces I wish you were looking at in person. Thank you for this submission, Brasswax. Both the art and the haiku are from his brilliant Scorpio brain." —Lashanna

---

### Share your events, art, writing, & more with ASP!

We are excited to grow this magic web and share the many things happening in the death care community.

Please write "Newsletter" in the subject heading and include all details (i.e. date/time, description, links, and any photos or graphics).

**Share your submissions with us!**

---

Thank you for continuing to exist on this planet with all the rest of us walking puffs of stardust.

A Sacred Passing | 7832 S 113th Street | Seattle, WA 98178 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!